

ERIC P. NEWMAN NUMISMATIC EDUCATION SOCIETY

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Dear Leroy:

I am glad I sent you my original appreciation for the Errorgram copies to the wrong address and my letter was returned. In the meantime I have found a further clue to what I had asked you and thus I can be more specific.

What I had written you (in addition to thanks) was if you knew anything about the planchet feeder and ejector used during the 1797-1828 period at the U.S. Mint. I have been working on that for many years. This includes the "open collar" on which no factual data has even been located. Breen in his glossary attempts to describe it but his description cannot possibly work in my opinion.

I know two important facts which are critical. Each die had a cylindrical neck of the same diameter as the perimeter of the die face instead of a bevel from the die face to the die stem. This was done for some reason because the die is weakened by so doing and this was an unusual practice.

The second fact is that the blanks were not put on the dies by hand or removed by hand. This is shown by George E. Sellers' comments about a mint visit in 1812 about which Sellers (a trained engineer) writes of his experience as a boy that "He put a blank planchet into my hand, showed me how to drop it in and where to place my hand to catch it as it came out." This indicates a feeder was used and an ejector was used.

Before I give you some of the ideas I have developed I thought I would let your mechanical mind think about it if you would do me that favor. You have demonstrated by what you wrote about the tongs or fingers of the later 19th century that you studied the matter carefully.

I believe the "open collar" system was very simple but very practical. Yet I am not sure how it functioned.

This is a most intriguing problem and I hope you like it well enough to help.

Thanks for listening,

Eric P. Newman

P.S. Margo has been a close friend for decades and we often talk about current numismatic situations.